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AND
HER NEIGHBORS

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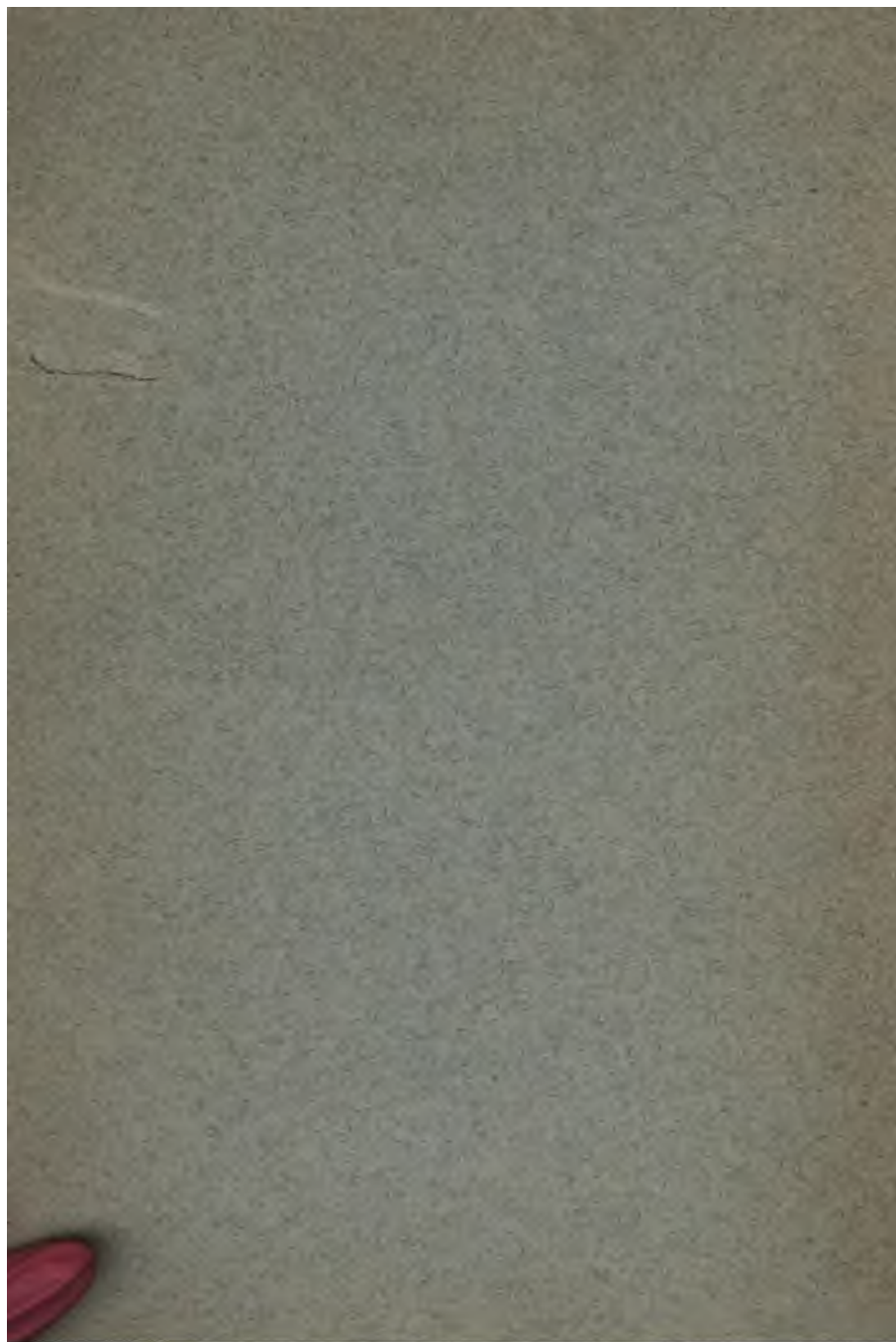
University of Michigan

Presented by

Prof. H. C. Adams

Dec 28 1904

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Recd. C.

Our Nation and Her Neighbors

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War with Spain is no longer a dreaded probability, but a dreadful fact. Not even the formalities are wanting. As I write, the news comes that the House of Representatives has just passed the joint resolution declaring war, and that the deed was done in one minute and forty-one seconds. Who held the stop-watch we are not told.

In an emergency like this Chinese Gordon's philosophy helps a little. "It is a delightful thing to be a fatalist," he wrote; "not as that word is generally employed, but to accept that when things happen, and not before, God has for some wise reason ordained them to happen. We have nothing further to do when the scroll of events is unrolled than to accept them as being for the best. Before it is unrolled it is another matter." I am Calvinist enough to believe with Gordon that whatever happens is divinely permitted; and that through this war, against which many of us strove, God will cause the wrath of man to praise Him. This is not saying that He prefers to be praised in this manner. If the wisdom and the justice of man would work out the same results, doubtless they would better

please Him and more abundantly honor Him. And we may well believe that whatever good results are to be gained as the issue of war might have been gained without war, if the people of our nation, and especially the Congress of the United States, had possessed a little more dignity and strength. Great have been the gains of just war, but it is Ulysses Grant who has testified: "Though I have been trained as a soldier, and have participated in many battles, there never was a time when, in my opinion, some way could not have been found of preventing the drawing of the sword." If we, the stronger party in this quarrel, had had a little more patience and steadiness of purpose, we might have compelled a peaceful settlement of this question, by which the horrors now existing in Cuba would have been abated and the island made free. It is true that the resources of our own diplomacy had been exhausted; but with such reports as our consular agencies have furnished us, with such a confession of the failure of autonomy as that of the De Lome letter, and with such a demonstration of the inability of the Spanish to rule as the destruction of the Maine presented, we could have gone before the great Powers and have compelled them to agree with us that Spain had forfeited her right to rule in Cuba. I believe that if the President had been allowed to follow his own judgment he would have worked out the problem for us without the loss of life and with far greater honor to the nation than can be won in a successful war with Spain. But the

temper of Congress forbade further negotiation, and swept the administration onward to war.

It may be said that delay was intolerable because the Cubans were starving. But, in truth, the prospect of speedily relieving their suffering would have been better if war had been delayed. The work of relief has now come to a pause; how soon it can be resumed no man can tell. If considerations of humanity had been always paramount, we should not have been unwilling to wait a little, before drawing the sword, that the starving people might first be fed.

It is not, however, profitable at this date to discuss this question of what might have been. It is not the Congress that might have been with which Providence and President McKinley had to deal, but the Congress that is. With this Congress no other result was possible. It was not, primarily, with the wisdom and justice of man that the problem had to be solved, but with the wrath of man.

There is large room for indignation in this business; it plays and it ought to play an important and decisive part; but if it had been more perfectly under the control of reason the issues would have been more benign. And one must confess, with a heavy heart, that several of the performances which the world has witnessed in the Capitol at Washington, since this matter was under consideration, are not reassuring to those who wish to see a rational and just solution of our difficult problems. More than once we have been forced to stop and ask ourselves whether

the moral elevation of our national legislature were such as to qualify it for the task of administering doctrine, reproof and correction in righteousness to the other nations of the earth.

That Congress, in this headlong zeal for war, reflected the sentiment of vast numbers of our people is not to be denied. And while this passion is by no means unmixed with baser elements, yet the prevailing motive is a generous sympathy with a suffering people, and a righteous resentment against cruelty and oppression. The passion might well have been better restrained, but it is not altogether unholy. At any rate it is the force that the Almighty is using to accomplish His purpose. Some may doubt whether any other force would have sufficed, but that must not be asserted. Doubtless if we had been a braver and a wiser people we might have done Spain more good and ourselves less harm. It must needs be that retributions come, and Providence must use such tools as men furnish Him; but if the hand that deals the blow is guided by brute passion more than by firm reason, neither the smitten nor the smiter gains the highest benefit.

That the end of this struggle will witness the expulsion of Spain from the island of Cuba is not, I think, doubted by any of us. The struggle may be more or less fierce and prolonged, but this is the issue to which it will come. And this will be a just retribution. So far as Spain is concerned, the ethical judgment of mankind will testify that she has got her deserts. She has abundantly proved her unfitness to rule her

colonies; her domination has been harsh, oppressive, ruinous; one by one her possessions on this side of the sea have revolted, but in all this experience she has learned absolutely nothing; the same tyrannous, exacting, brutalizing policy has been maintained for four centuries. The fact that Cuba has been in a condition of chronic insurrection for fifty years is itself sufficient to close the case against Spain. If, after three centuries and a half of her rule the Cubans were so turbulent and unreasonable that they would not live peaceably under her government, that is a demonstration of her fatal incapacity to govern them. That Spain has richly earned the punishment which she is now about to suffer cannot be gainsaid. It is the logic of history, it is the law of God, that great opportunities, misused or disused, are taken away from men and nations. Spain had a great opportunity of civilizing the Western Continent. The rights of discovery were hers, the most and the best of the territory passed under her power. So weak and oppressive has been her rule that it has nearly all been torn from her; only to Cuba and Porto Rico of all her vast western possessions does she now set up any claim.

This prolonged catastrophe of decaying dominion is not an accident. Long years ago Spain put out her own eyes and has ever since been stumbling in the darkness which she created for herself. The Inquisition was a crime that could not go unavenged. It was an attempt to exterminate independent thought and rational

leadership, and the history of Spanish decay and misrule shows how deplorably successful the attempt has been. This last long struggle with the existing insurrection in Cuba, in which Spain has proved herself powerless to restore order, impotent for everything except the wholesale murder of hundreds of thousands of innocent women and children, is the final and complete exhibition of her incapacity to rule. The conduct of Spain in Cuba up to date is a crime against civilization, and it is about to be punished by her expulsion from the island.

So much might be said by any unprejudiced onlooker; what is about to happen might seem to him the vindication of the righteous rule of that Providence which rendereth to men and nations according to their works. But the people of the United States, who are to be executioners of this decree, have another interest than that of the unprejudiced onlooker. To us it has become a very serious question; our sympathies are stirred, our moral feelings are aroused, and the time for action has come. We claim that our right to intervene is indubitable. Spain has maintained a national nuisance near our front door for a good many years; we have exhausted the resources of neighborly remonstrance and now we propose to abate the nuisance. The constant sight of unspeakable cruelties has become intolerable; we will endure it no longer. Evidence has accumulated that Spain has forfeited her right to Cuba; therefore, before the bar of the eternal justice we require her to leave the island.

The incident of the *Maine* greatly complicated this question. The first effect of that terrible tragedy, in just minds, was to check the onset of intervention. It seemed at first incredible, even monstrous to assert that Spain had any agency in that ghastly business. It must have been an accident. Instead of permitting ourselves to be inflamed and excited against Spain by the occurrence, we felt ourselves bound to guard our minds against even the suspicion of foul play. Because we had a controversy with Spain we would not permit ourselves to accuse her of such a crime until the evidence compelled us. It is a bitter thing to say that the evidence has been too strong for us. Scientific experts who have examined the testimony taken by the court of inquiry tell us that the ship must have been destroyed by a mine; the mine must have been planted there by Spanish officials; the ship was moored over it by Spanish officials; none but Spanish officials could have had access to the keyboard by which it was exploded. That the authorities at Madrid or the Captain General of Cuba gave orders for this destruction is not credible; but the kind of rule which Spain has been maintaining in Cuba makes deeds like this possible, and renders her powerless to prevent or punish them. Spain could have found the miscreants who perpetrated this wholesale assassination before now if she had tried to find them; we have heard of no attempt to detect or punish them. The attitude of the Spanish government in presence of this tragedy has completely sealed

the lips of those who once indignantly refused to believe that Spain could have been even indirectly or remotely connected with it. The incident completes and crowns the proof that Spain is unfit to govern Cuba, and furnishes us with a cogent reason for telling her so in the face of all the world.

It is not, however, primarily or chiefly to avenge the destruction of the *Maine* that we are going to war. Always, in such an hour of national excitement, the motives are mixed; many voices are heard; the lower elements in the life of the nation strive with the higher. There are elements in the national life to which the cry "Remember the *Maine*!" will furnish a strong incentive, but there is something higher and stronger than vengeance to which the heart of the nation now responds. One hears in the hot debate now raging, in newspaper and forum, two notes that quarrel in the ear and cannot blend; the one is the voice of the old militancy; the other is the voice of the new altruism. It makes you think of the commingling, in the moral crisis of Tannhaeuser, of the Venusberg music with the solemn chant of the Pilgrim's Chorus—the wild lawless strain winding itself round the great religious melody and clinging to it, yet gradually loosening its hold and falling back into silence while the voice of faith grows strong and confident and clear. Such, I trust, will be the issue of this confusion. The lower voices which talk of vengeance and hate and the healing of wounded honor fill the air with their harsh

clamor; but above this noise we hear the firm and strong appeal to the nation's nobler self—the stern repudiation of the ancient code of the duelist; the clear affirmation that the sword must not be drawn save in defense of suffering humanity. It is Massachusetts, God bless her! whose gray-haired senator has spoken to the heart of the nation:

“I want to enter upon this war with the sanction of international law, with the sympathy of all humane and liberty-loving people, with the approval of our own conscience, and with the certainty of the applauding judgment of history. I confess I do not like to think of the genius of America angry, snarling, shouting, screaming, elawing with her nails. I like rather to think of her in her honest and serene beauty, inspired by sentiments even toward her enemies not of hate but of love; perhaps a little pale about the eyes and a smile upon her lips, but as sure, determined, unerring, invincible as was the archangel Michael when he struck down and trampled upon the demon of darkness.”

This is the spirit in which, as I trust, we are going into this war. We are acting, not as the avenger of blood, but as the executor of righteousness. The fact of the destruction of our battleship is simply evidence which we hold up to the world to prove our right to say that we will no longer have such a next-door neighbor. We have served on her the order of eviction. But it is less a matter of vengeance than a sense of re-

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sponsibility for the peace of the neighborhood, for the suppression of misrule and cruelty.

We might conceive the case of a judge called to pronounce sentence upon a brigand and desperado who had been keeping a whole community in terror, but who had now been brought to justice. The fact that the judge's own home had lately been dynamited by this desperado would not be the only nor the chief reason why the judge should give him the full penalty of the law; if he were a just judge he would be careful not to let his sense of injury be the controlling motive of his action. Not resentment for the personal wrong, but regard for the public good would govern his judgment. The people of the United States desire, I trust, to take this high ground in their controversy with Spain. We are not fighting for conquest, nor for revenge, nor even, under the code of the duelist, for the reparation of wounded honor; we are fighting to redress wrongs which, though not suffered chiefly by ourselves, have become intolerable to us; we are fighting to put an end to savagery in our neighborhood. If any one shall say that this is a new kind of war, be it so; perchance it is a holier and more justifiable kind of war than any hitherto undertaken. Let us hope that the day is not far off when even this kind of war will be no longer necessary; when strong combinations of great Christian powers can restrain such violence without resorting to bloodshed. But so long as there are Spaniards and Turks holding weaker peoples in thrall and inflicting on them nameless

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injuries, so long will there be a call for strong nations to appear for the deliverance of the oppressed. There are malefactors, national as well as individual, who can only be restrained by force. When many strong nations are ready to unite for the exercise of this restraint upon the unruly, nothing more than a show of force will be necessary. ~~United~~ then, the chivalric impulse which makes a man stand between a brutal bully and his helpless victim, ought to inspire stronger peoples to intervene for the protection of the weak and defenseless.

Until

When the Armenian butcheries were in progress most of us felt that they ought to have been stopped; that if the Great Powers could not unitedly intervene, any one of them would have been qualified in a peremptory demand that the savagery should cease. Some of us never quite forgave Lord Salisbury's government for not flinging diplomacy to the winds and taking the Turk by the throat. Multitudes of Englishmen, like William Watson, bitterly denounced the inaction of their own government. The excuse for that inaction was the danger of a general European war. But no such vast calamity overshadows the present crisis, and it is not easy to see how those who condemned England for not intervening to protect the Armenians could justify America for failing to put an end to slaughter and starvation in Cuba. We may recall the kindling words of Mrs. Browning in her poem, "A Court Lady." The time is the war of Italian liberation, and the poem represents the queen of

Italy passing through a hospital, and pausing at the cots of the soldiers with a blessing for the Lombard and the Tuscan and the Romagnole—Italians all; then—

“On she passed to a Frenchman, his arm carried off by a ball,—
Kneeling, ‘O, more than my brother, how shall I thank thee for all?’

“ ‘Each of these heroes around us has fought for his land and line,
But thou hast fought for a stranger, in hate of a wrong not thine!’

“ ‘Happy are all free peoples, too strong to be dispossessed,
But blessed are they among nations who dare to be strong for the rest!’ ”

It is this beatitude which America may hope to win in the days now before us. So far as military prestige is concerned I do not see how we are to gain much by a war with Spain. There is little glory to be won in overcoming a poor, bankrupt, distracted, fourth-rate power.

The war may be prolonged, it may inflict upon us some terrible injuries, but so far as human foresight can avail there is no more question about the issue than there would be in a test between a stalwart athlete and a crippled and half-paralyzed invalid. We shall all be glad when the cruelty and misrule of Spain are brought to

an end in Cuba, but we shall have no great reason to be proud of our victory as a martial achievement. And the frantic zest for war with such an antagonist which finds utterance on the streets and in the newspapers does not make one very proud of the American people. The reassuring consideration is that this is not the real reason why we are going to war.

The nation does not doubt that the issue of the war will be the evacuation of Cuba by the Spanish power. We will trust that this end may be gained by the smallest possible expenditure of blood and treasure. But when it is gained, what then? This is the question which now confronts us. After taking so much responsibility for the welfare of Cuba are we to leave her to her fate? The President says that annexation is not to be thought of; in that judgment most Americans agree. But it is said that we must use our good offices to secure a stable, free and independent government in Cuba. Does anybody realize just how much this means? When the Spaniards are driven out of Cuba will there be any elements left out of which stable, free and independent government can be constructed? It is all very well to say, as our orators have been saying in Congress, that the people of Cuba are and of right ought to be free and independent. Independent of Spain they may be, by grace of our arms; and doubtless they ought to be free, but they are not, and for the next hundred years they will not be unless some strong power steps in and rules them for their own good, enforcing order and obedi-

ence and slowly educating them to respect those muniments of law by which alone freedom is established and defended.

It ought to be understood at the outset that such an intervention as we have undertaken involves serious consequences and heavy responsibilities. Our task will not be performed when the Spaniards shall have been driven out of Cuba. Doubtless those senators were sincere when they framed the resolution affirming that our intervention in Cuban affairs would end when the Spanish power was broken; but they could not have fully comprehended the problem with which they were dealing. They would have been wiser if they had phrased their disclaimer somewhat differently. To say that we are not fighting for territorial aggrandizement is, I hope, entirely true; but to say that we do not propose to take any responsibility for the Cubans after they are set free from Spain is neither kind nor wise. They will need our protection, and we shall not be able to withhold it.

The expectation that the people of Cuba will be able to govern themselves as soon as the Spaniards are driven out, is one with which we must not delude ourselves. It is passing strange that our orators in Congress and our advocates in the newspaper offices should know so little of the lessons of experience. Republics of Spanish American origin are not rare on this continent; would it not be worth while to find out what manner of things they are? The experiment which it is proposed to try in Cuba has been tried

a great many times; if anybody can point to an instance in tropical countries in which it has been successful, that would be instructive and encouraging. Quite a number of such countries upon this continent have been under republican forms of government for from fifty to seventy-five years; if any one knows of an instance in which free and stable government has been developed among them it might be well to speak up and tell us where it is. Somehow the geographers and the historians and the newspaper reporters do not seem to have discovered it.

The April number of *The Forum* contains an article by that experienced and capable observer and student, Mr. William Eleroy Curtis, respecting the republics, so-called, of Central America. Speaking generally of these states, Mr. Curtis says:

"Public opinion in the Latin states is tolerant toward official peculation; perhaps this is due to habit. It is too often the case in Central America for a new president, when he first comes into power, to invest in New York, London, or Paris as soon as possible a sum sufficient to keep himself and his family in luxury for the rest of their lives. When that is accomplished his next effort is to provide for his re-election by the ordinary means known to politicians in those countries, which involve liberal allowances and sinecures for his supporters, the appointment of unnecessary officials, unwarranted liberality in granting contracts and concessions, and the maintenance of an army to

preserve order and protect the palace. Though such efforts, when directed by a brave and skillful man, usually prove successful, rivals are apt to spring up, and factions and feuds are numerous. Whenever a revolution occurs it means that some president is endeavoring to perpetuate his authority against some one who desires to succeed him, or that some ambitious statesman is so eager for political promotion that he cannot wait for an election. If let alone the people never rebel. They are patient, patriotic, long suffering; and while their partizanship finds expression in fiercer emotions than are often displayed in the political contests of North America they will submit to almost any kind of misgovernment until their indignation is aroused by some unusual act.

"This peculiarity of the Central American republics keeps them poor. It prevents the development of their natural resources, the construction of internal improvements and the establishment of mechanical industries. It frightens capital from making investments, and keeps immigrants away. There is practically no immigration. Money raised by taxation or by the sale of bonds for educational purposes or public works is too often used to pay an army and to buy ammunition for the suppression of a revolution. In one country four loans have been made for one and the same purpose during the last twenty years, and every dollar has been diverted. The roads are neglected, schools and public institutions are unsupported, and citizens who are fortu-

nate enough to have a surplus invest it abroad because they dare not engage in enterprises that may be interrupted by political disturbances."

Such is the testimony of this competent witness respecting the political conditions which generally prevail in Central American republics. He suggests no exceptions to this statement; if different conditions from these anywhere exist he does not mention them.

Speaking particularly of Guatemala Mr. Curtis tells us that "a form of peonage still exists in the Central American countries; and the law requires that a man who owes money must work out the debt if the creditor insists upon it. Even death does not release the debt, for the obligation rests upon his children until the money is paid. Thus the 'haciendados,' or planters, who are of Spanish origin, hold their laborers with as strong a grip as when slavery was lawful. But the peons are contented, and seldom make an effort to escape from bondage. Their masters live at the capital or in Paris or New York, occasionally visiting their farms, which are committed to the care of overseers. * * * There is but little independent farming among the common people, although each family has a garden-plot on which the women raise vegetables for market. There are lying idle in Guatemala millions of acres of excellent soil that might be bought for a song. But it is not customary for the laboring classes to own their own homes. They are contented to remain as their father's and grandfather's were; contributing to the prosperity of the

grandees, into whose pockets the profits of their labor go."

One of the nominal presidents of Guatemala, the late Justo Rufino Barrios, made vigorous efforts to educate and reform the people, but he was a dictator rather than a constitutional ruler; "there was, so to speak, only one man in Guatemala while he was president." That he "had high aspirations for the welfare of his people" is not to be denied; but it is also to be confessed "that he failed to observe the conventional distinction between public and private property, and accumulated a fortune of several millions during his presidency, which he invested in New York and Paris for the benefit of his family." In 1886 he was shot from an ambush while leading an army against Salvador.

Of his nephew, Rema Barrios, who has since been styled president, this writer says: "He had marked ability, was educated in San Francisco and at a German university, married a young lady from New Orleans and was credited with a higher degree of integrity than most of his predecessors and with a genuine ambition to promote the development and prosperity of his country. But all these advantages did not enable him to overcome the hereditary tendency, and he fell a victim to his love of power. An attempt to prolong his administration beyond the constitutional period provoked a revolution which he suppressed with difficulty; and a servant of a merchant who had been executed without process of law found an opportunity for swift and fatal revenge."

This assassination of Rema Barrios was only two months ago; how many presidents the country has had since then I do not know. So runs the world in the "republic" of Guatemala.

Salvador is the "republic" which adjoins Guatemala on the South. The soil is extremely fertile; the population is about 800,000, of whom 20,000 are whites who own all the land, fill the professions and manage the politics, while the 780,000 mixed blood Indians "follow their fortunes with an unquestioning fidelity and with an enthusiasm that is worthy of a better cause." Free schools and compulsory education are there, on paper; three per cent. of the population attend school. "The rich," says Mr. Curtis, "live in luxury and spend their money freely. They are highly educated, accomplished in the polite arts and fond of foreign travel and social enjoyment. The peons live in a primitive manner. They are uneducated, and lack most of the comforts of civilization, but they are devoted to their employers, and to the interests of the Catholic church." The words that follow ought to be carefully attended to, because they may be taken as a fair account of the political condition of most Spanish-American "republics":

"There is probably more politics in Salvador than in any other country in the world; and while it appears in the geographies as a republic it is really an absolute monarchy (?), ruled by a small group of politicians who maintain their power by military force, and are overthrown as often as the opposition can form and carry out a conspiracy.

There has not been a 'constitutional' president in Salvador for many years. The presidents have always been 'pronunciamentos'; that is, they have come into power by self-proclamation, rather than through an election by the people, according to law. This is so common that the people expect nothing else. I happened to land at La Libertad shortly after President Cleveland had been inaugurated, and was much surprised when the governor asked me whether he were a constitutional or a 'pronunciamento' president."

After sketching the provisions of the written constitution of Salvador, which is pronounced "a model document," Mr. Curtis says: "But these admirable provisions are purely theoretical; and there has not been a free election in Salvador during the present generation. The president is generally a soldier; and the commander-in-chief of the army generally steps into that office when a vacancy occurs. There is a law forbidding the conscription of soldiers; but it has never deterred the government from raising as many troops as were required. A story is told of a recruiting officer who sent a detachment of recruits to headquarters with a note which read: 'I forward, herewith, one hundred volunteers. Please return immediately the ropes with which they are tied.'"

This report, in a magazine of the current month, upon the existing conditions in Central America, should throw some light upon the social and political problems which we are taking upon our hands. Another brief recital, from

another and equally intelligent investigator, will confirm this impression. The editor of "The Congregationalist," published in Boston, has just returned from a visit to another Spanish American "republic"—that of Venezuela, and in his issue of March 31 he reports what he has seen and heard. Venezuela has been a republic in name for eighty-seven years. The revolt from the Spanish rule was led by men of commanding ability, Miranda, Bolivar and others; some of our own countrymen gave their lives for the liberty of Venezuela. Venezuela has a constitution similar to ours, and a population of two and a half millions. Of its present condition and prospects the editor of "The Congregationalist" gives the following sketch:

"Mr. Andrade was inaugurated president of the latter country at Caracas, February 28. He was the choice of his predecessor General Crespo. Mr. Hernandez, the defeated candidate, at once began to gather his followers into a camp near Valencia. They are variously estimated at from a few hundreds to 5000 men. The merchants of Caracas, many of whom are foreigners, have made considerable contributions to support the existing government. Crespo, now commander-in-chief of the army, is daily making conscripts of the workmen on the plantations and in the cities. These are mostly taken off to headquarters by night, but occasionally are seen marching dejectedly through the streets under guard. Crespo amassed a large fortune during his four years' term as president, and with the army is guarding

his estates while organizing a campaign to suppress the incipient revolution. He furnishes supplies to the army, thus daily augmenting his possessions. Hernandez owns a fine property in New York city, to which he may retreat in case of failure. But should his prospects improve, a considerable portion of the conscripts may escape to his camp. If he should capture Caracas, the revolution would succeed. Once in power it would be for the interest of business men to support him.

"But Venezuela is not today a nation. It is a political party, maintained by force of arms for private gain. It is a business enterprise, in which vast national wealth is crudely operated by costliest methods for immediate returns; for it is liable at any time to be captured by an opposing party of equal greed.

"A word for patriotism is in the Venezuelan dictionary, but it is practically obsolete. So far as it has meaning it stands for commercialism confined to a clique. The few are rich. The great majority are poor, and, so far as they participate in government, are swung alternately to the support of one or another party by vain promises of better conditions for themselves. Whatever party wins the people lose.

"Venezuela is like a farm or mine held by tenants on no certain title and for no definite period, to get all possible out of it by any means in the shortest time. It illustrates the depths to which a republic may fall when selfish aims dominate, when patriotism and faith live only in name.

The government of Venezuela is Tammany in its maturity. It is accepted as a matter of course. Neither its supporters nor its opposers feel any need of apologizing for it. Those who profit by it value it for what they think it is worth to themselves. Those who lose by it keep for it a hatred held in check by hopes of capturing it."

Since this was printed, on Monday, April 17, a dispatch from Venezuela, by way of London, informs us that General Crespo was killed on Saturday, the 15th, in a fight with the forces of Hernandez. Whether this means the success of the insurgents or not we have not yet heard; indeed these South American revolutions are so frequent that they are hardly news; the telegraph editor probably throws many of the dispatches announcing them into the waste basket.

A picturesque and realistic description of the conditions prevailing in these South American "republics" may be found in Mr. Richard Harding Davis's "Soldiers of Fortune." A more prosaic and precise statement is this, from Mr. Benjamin Kidd's "Social Evolution." Mr. Kidd is speaking of the vast territories embraced in Central America and in tropical South America:

"In this expanse, which includes over three-fourths of the entire continental area south of the territory of the United States, we have one of the richest regions of the earth. Under the outward forms of European government it appears, however, to be slowly drifting out of our civilization. The habit has lately obtained among us of thinking of those countries as inhabited by

Europeans only, and as included in our western civilization—a habit doubtless due to the tendency to regard them as colonies of European powers which have become independent after the manner of the United States. As a matter of fact this view has little to justify it. In the twenty-two republics comprising the territory in question, considerably over three-fourths of the entire population are descendants of the original Indian inhabitants, or imported negroes or mixed races. The pure white population appears to be unable to maintain itself for more than a limited number of generations, without recruiting itself from the outside. It is a gradually diminishing element, tending to ally itself in an increasing degree with 'color.' * * * We must apparently look forward to the time when these territories will be almost exclusively peopled by the Black and Indian races.

"Meanwhile the resources of this large region remain almost undeveloped or run to waste. During the past fifty years the European powers may be said to have endeavored to develop them in a manner that apparently promised to be advantageous to both parties, and not inconsistent with the spirit of the new altruistic ideas which have come to govern men's minds. Since the period of their independence immense sums have been borrowed by the republics of Central and South America, with the object of developing their resources, and large amounts have been invested by private persons in public enterprises undertaken by Europeans in these countries.

But the general prevalence of those qualities which distinguish peoples of low social efficiency has been like a blight on the whole region. In nearly all the republics in question the history of government has been the same. Under the outward forms of written laws and constitutions of the most exemplary character, they have displayed a general absence of that sense of public and private duty which has always distinguished peoples who have reached a high state of social development. Corruption in all branches of the government, insolvency, bankruptcy and political revolutions succeeding each other at short intervals, have become the normal incidents of public life—the accompanying features being a permanent state of uncertainty, lack of energy and enterprise amongst the people, and general commercial depression.”

Such is the verdict of history upon the attempts to establish republican institutions in the tropical Spanish-American populations. Mr. Kidd includes in his generalizations twenty-two “republics” of Central and tropical South America; he makes no exception among them. The impression which his words convey, and the impression which we gain from the current reports is that there is no tendency to improvement in these countries. Indeed it is easy to see that such political conditions hold in themselves no saving energies; corruption does not cure itself.

These remarks do not apply to Chili or the Argentine Republic, both of which are to a considerable extent populated by Europeans. Even

in these the conditions are not ideal, but they are less discouraging than in the countries nearer the equator. Mexico is sometimes mentioned as a progressive state, and the improvement in that ancient seat of civilization is notable and cheering; but Mexico is under the hand of a powerful and wise dictator, who permits no constitutional impediment to obstruct his plans. To speak of the government of Diaz as republican is to forget the meaning of words.

The question now arises whether we have any reason for believing that a different fate is in store for the republic of Cuba, after Spain has been expelled, than that which has overtaken other tropical Spanish republics. The conditions are, indeed, in some respects dissimilar from those which have prevailed in Central and South America. The population is of a different character. In Central and South America the bulk of the population consists of the descendants of the aborigines, more or less mixed with Spanish and other European blood. In Cuba little or nothing of the aboriginal element remains. The natives were practically exterminated by the slavery to which they were consigned by the Spaniards; negro slaves were imported to take their places and since emancipation the laboring people are mainly negroes. About 50,000 Chinese coolies must also be reckoned in this class. Census reports are not altogether trustworthy; but according to the best information I can gather, the population at the outbreak of the present disturbances was about 1,600,000, of

whom probably half a million were negroes. Something like a million of whites were, therefore, in Cuba; and these were partly Spaniards residing on the island for revenue only, either connected with the government or engaged in commercial enterprises, having few social relations with the native Cubans—regarding them, indeed, with great contempt. Between the native Spaniards, “*peninsulares*,” they are called, and the native Cubans or *creoles* there has been no love to lose for many a day. In 1872 about one-sixth of the whites were “*peninsulares*.” Many of these have returned to Spain during the insurrection; a large number of the poorer *creoles* and the blacks, probably not less than 200,000, have perished by starvation and disease. Before the country shall be pacified the population will therefore have been greatly reduced. The native Spaniards who have not gone will not then stand on the order of their going; the country will be too hot to hold them. The *creoles* and the negroes will constitute the population, and the whites will be, I suppose, in a considerable majority. This, then, is the difference between the Cuban population and the population of most of the South American and Central American states—that the whites are and are likely to be more numerous in Cuba than in the other countries, and that the colored races which make up the remainder are not Indians or mixed bloods, but negroes and Chinese coolies.

So far as the negroes are concerned, it must be remembered that they were mostly slaves until

twelve years ago; and slaves, not of such masters as those of our Southern States, but of masters the great majority of whom were ignorant and superstitious and brutal. The slaves on many of our Southern plantations had received some instruction; they had lived under the forms of democratic government; many of them had absorbed not a little moral and political education. This has not been the case with the slaves in Cuba; their unpreparedness for the responsibilities of citizenship must be far greater than was that of our own freedmen.

Of the white population of Cuba I do not wish to speak uncharitably. I have no doubt that there are honorable and patriotic men and women amongst them. But the measure of their intelligence as a mass can be taken from the last census report which shows that, in a population of 1,600,000, there were 34,000 pupils in schools of all kinds, or two and one-tenth per cent. of the population. Compare also, this statement by the eminent geographer, Keith Johnston, that not one in ten of the children of free parents, in the days before the abolition of slavery, received lettered education of any kind.

Nor have I any desire to speak unkindly of the religious influences under which this whole population, white and black, has been reared. It is, as we all know, a Roman Catholic country. But there are Catholics and Catholics. Our American Catholics partake of the American spirit of intelligence and are spending a great deal of money for the education of their children and

youth; the Spanish Catholics follow Spanish ideas, and the type of intellect and character which they are producing there is a very different thing from that which is produced, under Catholic influences, in the United States of America.

As to the general character of the creole population, I will venture on no sweeping statements. It is evident that as a whole the people must be deplorably ignorant; that the religious training which they have received has been far different from that which Roman Catholics receive in England and Germany and America. The climatic influences are not such as to develop the robust virtues. That there are strong tendencies among the Cubans to effeminacy and sensuality is not denied.

"Although," says one authority, "the 'creoles' and the 'peninsulares' are of the same origin, the difference between them is most striking. They can be distinguished at a glance in the streets of Havana. The creoles are feeble and indolent, even when they are children of parents born in Spain. The Cuban Spaniards on the other hand are a sturdy and energetic body of men. * * * They treat the creoles with a scorn and contempt only exceeded by the hatred mixed with fear with which the latter regard the dominant population."

These sketches do not raise any high hopes of a superior quality of citizenship among the Cubans. Add to all this the fact that they are utterly unpractised in the intellectual and politic-

al habits of self-governing peoples. Neither they nor any of their ancestors have had anything to do with governing themselves. Is it supposed that such a race is going to take up off-hand the business of popular government?

One thing may be safely affirmed: No population resembling this ever did establish and maintain for any length of time free and stable democratic government. It has been tried a good many times, and has always failed. Until the thing has been done somewhere in the world we may modestly venture to question the wisdom of the people who are trying to do it.

I am not now gainsaying the fact that the Cuban leaders at the present time are devoted and patriotic men. But the strength of a republic is not in the leaders, but in the rank and file. The few can never lift up the many by the machinery of democracy; the many will drag down the few. If the mass is ignorant and brutal, the leadership will quickly pass from the hands of the wise and good to the hands of the unscrupulous and the vile. The Cuban leaders are no better men than Miranda or Bolivar of Venezuela, or Barrios of Gautemala; but how much has the leadership of these men availed to secure for their countries free and stable democratic government?

To say, then, that we propose to drive out the Spaniards and leave the Cubans to their fate is not to speak advisedly. The kind of government which would spring up from the soil when the Spanish tyranny was swept away would not be

worth the sacrifice of life and treasure that it is likely to cost.

To put an end to Spanish tyranny and then stand by and see it replaced with Cuban anarchy would be a proceeding in which we could not justify ourselves in the eye of the nations. No; we have put our hand to the plough and there is no looking back. We have taken on ourselves the responsibility of suppressing misrule in Cuba; now we must see that the island is well and benignly ruled. To cast out one devil is not enough; we must see to it that seven others, worse than the first, do not enter in.

But how shall this be done? We have said that we will not annex Cuba; and if we had not said it we could not incorporate this island into our national domain and undertake to govern it by our constitutional machinery. That involves universal suffrage, and self-government, which is precisely what these people are not fit for and will not be for many a year. It is evident that here is a problem of statesmanship. We have no governmental machinery, no political apparatus for managing such a dependency as Cuba is likely to be. England can do it. Her colonial system easily disposes of such a task. France, our sister republic, seems to know how to do it. She has held and subdued and civilized Algeria and Tunis. The work was begun under the empire, but it has been carried forward under the republic. If we are going into business of this sort it will be necessary for us to furnish ourselves with the tools and appliances by which it can be done.

We shall need some carefully considered laws, some new forms of administration; I rather think that we shall be obliged to have some constitutional amendments. All this involves a considerable extension and some reconstruction of our political system. It involves the abandonment, in such populations, of universal suffrage, and the introduction of limited, tentative and progressive methods of enfranchisement. It involves the frank admission and enforcement of the truth that some men do not know as much and are not as good citizens as some other men; and that there are those who do not know enough and are not good enough to take part in governing their fellow-men. If we are going into business of this sort we have got to free our minds of a good deal of cant, and stop chasing rainbows; we have got to send the popular orator to the war and call the practical administrator to the front. And when we begin to use our common sense a little more freely in this business of political administration we shall see that it is too delicate and difficult business to be entrusted to those who have no other qualification for it than that they have been born males and have contrived to eat and drink and breathe for twenty-one years. Something more than this is necessary to qualify a man for taking part in a free government which means to endure; and possibly our experiments in the tentative enfranchisement of the people of Cuba may teach us some lessons that we may wisely apply upon this continent. I am not at all sure that Providence is not going to show us how to

reform our home administration by giving us some such tasks as will be thrust into our hands in Cuba.

It may be said that we cannot do such work as this. But why not? England can do it; France can do it; little Holland can do it; why cannot we? All these countries have done a great deal of this kind of work. Say what we will about their greed of empire, this is a vastly better world today than it would have been if these great nations had not put forth their strength and disciplined their wisdom in just such enterprises as these. Is there anything in our political system which disables us from undertaking any kind of good work that may fall to the lot of a Christian nation? If so, we had better reconstruct our political system. If, in the next fifteen years we could do for Cuba what England has done for Egypt in the last fifteen years, it would be one of the greatest achievements of our history. Fifteen years ago the government of Egypt was drifting swiftly to anarchy and ruin. Within thirteen years its debt had increased from \$15,000,000 to \$445,000,000, almost thirty fold. "With a submissive population," says Mr. Kidd, "a corrupt bureaucracy, and a reckless, ambitious and voluptuous ruler, surrounded by adventurers of every kind, we had all the elements of national bankruptcy and ruin." England's interests, rather than her honor, seemed to demand intervention in this case; but the Liberal government fought against this idea. I have just been reading an essay by Mr. Gladstone, written in 1877,

in which he sturdily protested against the occupation of Egypt. But England at length reluctantly took up the task of straightening out the crooked finances of Egypt, and found herself, just as we shall find ourselves, with a large contract on her hands. It was impossible for her to retreat, and she has done for that hapless country a great and inestimable service. The taxation which was almost confiscation, has been greatly reduced and equalized; the administration of justice has been greatly improved; new methods of irrigation have added large areas of land for cultivation; the cotton crop has increased fifty per cent.; the foreign trade has been vastly augmented, and the credit of the country so strengthened that the bonds rose in nine years from 59 to 98. All this guardianship exercised over Egypt by England has certainly tended to make that country freer, more prosperous, and happier than it was before. And British influence in Egypt, as Mr. Alfred Milner has said, "is not exercised to impose an uncongenial foreign system upon a reluctant people. It is a force making for the triumph of the simplest ideas of honesty, humanity and justice, to the value of which Egyptians are just as much alive as any one else." England has profited by all this; but she has gained not by despoiling, but by enriching Egypt. And "neither directly nor indirectly," says Mr. Milner, "has Great Britain drawn from her predominant position any profit at the expense of other nations." Her "gain is also the gain of civilization." Is not this good work? To break

in pieces the oppressor, to lift from a whole population the heavy hand of the spoiler, to lead in light and liberty, peace and plenty—is there any better work than this for the great nations of the earth?

Something like this is what we shall find ourselves pledged to do for Cuba, and if we have not the ideas and the laws and the governmental facilities for doing such work as this, the sooner we get them the better.

A large amount of work of this kind is waiting to be done by somebody. Vast spaces of earth, that ought to be fruitful and bountiful of good for the whole race, are now cursed by misrule and anarchy; is it not the high calling of the great nations to reclaim these blighted lands, to set free these hapless peoples? We shall be called to take part in this work; and the first installment of our task is set for us in Cuba. Not a little work of this kind is waiting for us on this continent. We have assumed that we and nobody else are responsible for this entire hemisphere. I wonder if we comprehend the magnitude of the undertaking to which we have thus committed ourselves. For my part I doubt the wisdom of this exclusive claim, because it seems to me that in these large undertakings for the liberation and development of sinking populations, the great nations of the earth should take counsel together. I look for the time—and the centripetal tendencies of commerce and the great fraternities of labor are hastening it—when a mighty confederation of nations shall join to establish peace and

order in all the earth. The United States of America will not wish to be outside of that confederation. The counsels of isolation which were wise in the days of Washington are no longer applicable; we are living in a new day, in a new world; and it is no longer the baseless fabric of a vision that the poet descried:

“For I dipt into the future, far as human eye
could see,
Saw the vision of the world and all the wonders
that would be;
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies
of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down
with costly bales;
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there
rained a ghastly dew
From the nations’ airy navies grappling in the
central blue;
Far along the world wide whispers of the south
wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging
through the thunderstorm,
Till this war-drum throbbed no longer, and
the battle-flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the federation of
the world;
There the common sense of most shall hold a
fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in uni-
versal law.”

How this confederation is to be formed I am not quite sure, but the way is opening. It will begin with a compact of friendship between America and England; (I wonder how many of those senators who defeated that treaty would dare to vote against it today!) and when that is formed France can hardly hold aloof from it; and Switzerland, brave little Holland, Belgium and the Scandinavian countries will naturally gravitate toward it. As for the absolutist empires, let them stay outside, if they so decree; the power of such a confederation, like the magnetic mountain, will draw from the absolutist ships the very nails that hold them together, and internal revolutions will sweep away the obstacles that hinder their fraternization with the other nations of the earth. The whole movement of humanity is developing this consciousness of unity; the governments that are most responsive to the thought of the people are most aware of it; it is not only those deep sea cables which join England with her colonies, but every other strand of steel that binds distant lands together of which Mr. Kipling's words are true:

“Hush, men talk today o’er the waste of the ultimate slime,
And a new word runs between, whispering, ‘Let us be one!’ ”

We cannot now wait for this great consummation; we must gird ourselves for the work on our hands. Only let us keep high aloft the

whitest banner ever flung to the breeze in any war between nations; let us know for ourselves of a surety, and make all the world own, that the sword which we draw is the sword bathed in heaven; that we are fighting not for territory or empire or national honor, but for the redress of wrongs not our own, for the establishment of peace and justice on the earth.

Is there not great peril in such an undertaking? Vast peril. To hold the nation to this high purpose is not an easy task. Yet we cannot fall below it. The Turk may fight for greed or for vengeance and not be greatly damaged by it; the American cannot, without losing his soul. Any foreign war which has not for its central purpose the welfare of humanity would curse this nation with a great curse.

The real reason of this war is this highest reason. Many, no doubt, have urged this reason insincerely, but the heart of the nation would never have consented to war for any lower purpose. The war will be prosecuted in this spirit and for this end.

Two things I hope for as the outcome of it:

First, I trust that it will be made evident to everybody over the sea that America stands for something else besides the almighty dollar; that the people of this country can take great risks and make great sacrifices in a cause which promises them no selfish gain or aggrandizement. That demonstration will be worth a great deal to America; it will strengthen the hopes of all who love liberty in the nations of the old world.

Secondly, I trust and believe that this fire of a consecrated purpose burning at the heart of the nation will help to consume the iniquities of our own national politics. This sublime idea that the nation lives not for itself alone, lifted up and glorified, ought to throw a revealing light into all our caucuses and council chambers. What place has the self-seeker in the service of such a nation? So long as international law teaches that the nation is a colossal egotist, seeking only its own advantage, the citizen seems justified in making the law of the nation the law of his own life. When we begin to understand that nations must live unselfishly, the citizen may be able to see that he cannot follow the career of a spoilsman.

Nations, like men, are saved not by law but by love. To some of us it has long been evident that salvation could come to this people only through the enkindling of some high and pure passion in the national heart. Perhaps this experience may awaken in us that enthusiasm of humanity by which the life is purified. In saving others we may save ourselves.

